

Highlights from the Outcomes Advisory Council

Happy spring!

We invite you to read about what the Outcomes Advisory Council (OAC) and Waubonsee faculty have been working on to improve student learning. As we continue to move forward in improving student learning, the OAC has had a dynamic and engaging year so far.

Highlights from fall 2020 and spring 2021's FDD include:

- AEFIS's Institutional Learning Outcomes Data Collection Launch
- Curriculum Mapping in OAC
- HLC Assessment Academy Completion
- Spring's FDD's Collaboration Session

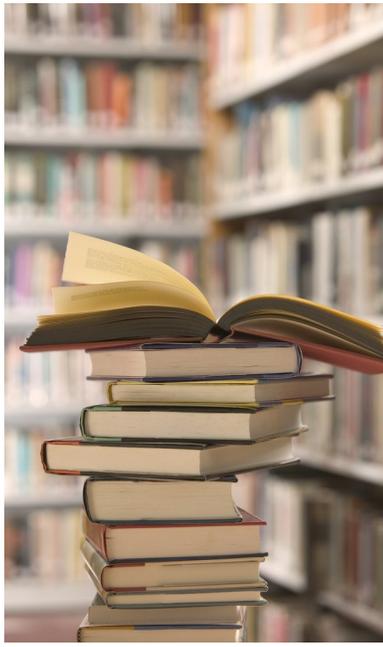
OUTCOMES ADVISORY COUNCIL MISSION

The mission of the Outcomes Advisory Council (OAC) is to guide and support Waubonsee's outcomes assessment process both to continually improve teaching and learning and to help Waubonsee Community College meet accreditation standards. The primary goals of the OAC are to:

- develop a college-wide culture of continuous improvement through teaching, learning, curriculum and instruction;
- provide faculty support, feedback and training on outcomes assessment;
- recommend and share guidelines related to outcomes assessment;
- solicit a diverse range of faculty perspectives and input on the creation of an institutional outcomes assessment plan and promote the implementation of high-impact institutional practices; and,
- review institutional outcomes assessment data to provide and encourage continuous improvement practices.

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THE FACULTY DEVELOPMENT AND ENGAGEMENT WEBSITE

In collaboration with Faculty Development & Engagement, a website specifically for faculty was developed. This website was launched in fall 2019, and contains resources that focus on development, engagement, and

instruction. Learning Outcomes, Curriculum and Program Development has created pages on this site that focus on curriculum, new programs, and assessment. The website can be found at <https://facultydae.waubonsee.edu/>.

Topics Include:

AEFIS
Curriculum Council
Creating Assignments and Exams
Institutional Learning Outcomes
Outcomes Advisory Council

Assessment
Curriculum Mapping
Collecting and Analyzing Data
Student Evaluation of Instruction
Program Review Process

Plans and Report for Learning Improvement

Thank you to everyone for completing a Plan/Reports for Learning Improvement, as well as the Program Review or Annual Update. OAC began reviewing Learning Improvement Reports submitted on December 1, 2020 this spring. Reports will be returned by the end of the semester.

Curriculum Mapping

Fall 2020, OAC begin using curriculum mapping. Mapping provides the opportunity to look at where outcomes are taught and assessed. The mapping process is a way to ensure the best conditions for student achievement. We will continue to work on mapping and plan to provide development to all faculty in the future. For more information on curriculum mapping visit: <https://facultydae.waubonsee.edu/instruction/assessment/curriculum-mapping>

AEFIS Workshops

Join us for AEFIS workshops.
Topics include

- Navigating AEFIS
- Assessment and data collection
- Student evaluation of instruction

Thursday, March 11th 2:00 p.m.
Monday, March 29th 2:00 p.m.

Visit:
<https://facultydae.waubonsee.edu/>
to sign up.

CURRICULUM MAPPING IN ECONOMICS

Elior Iseli

I have always considered teaching to be a bridge that helps people move from one location to another. While a bridge has many different components, users get their satisfaction from the use of the entire bridge, not from each individual component of the bridge. Economics, history, mathematics, biology, and all other fields are the pillars of the bridge of education, but I often did not see many connections between our programs. Curriculum mapping helped me see connections between all of our programs.

In my economics courses, curriculum mapping allowed me to align my assessments not only to my course and program learning outcomes, but also to our institutional learning outcomes. I can now clearly see where my individual learning outcomes in economics match the learning outcomes from other programs in order to provide a holistic education to our students.

Beyond the above-mentioned multilevel alignment process, curriculum mapping has promoted more collaboration in my department in the design of assessments, assignments, teaching content, and materials to enhance student learning. A program may have many instructors, but curriculum mapping allows us to teach the same topics to shape the future of our students, regardless of our individual differences. By developing our curriculum map, my field has been better able to meet the needs of industry and better prepare students for their transfer schools. Curriculum mapping helped my department to catalog learning outcomes and prerequisite relationships, maintain a unified repository for the department, and communicate clear expectations to students.

Within a given course, mapping can be used to facilitate a better understanding of the material as well as the learning process. Mapping is similar to the flow of concepts in a course and shows how concepts are connected to each other through course learning outcomes. For example, in

mathematics, it is often impossible to first teach integrals without starting with derivatives. In economics, it is not possible to discuss market structures without first talking about supply and demand.

I predict the use of curriculum mapping might improve other areas such as contextualizing learning for students by providing this roadmap and may help to connect faculty across subjects, departments, and even institutions.

Contextualizing learning for students is accomplished by identifying and reinforcing the reasons and timeline for teaching the concepts we teach. Mapping helps us organize concepts logically in our courses. As a result, it is possible to identify when material is introduced and reinforced, as well as how the application or usefulness in real life is conveyed to students. Mapping also provides for improved conversations when connecting faculty across subjects, departments, and institutions. The developed visuals can then be easily understood and will show the value of these connections between different courses in each degree or program.

In summary, curriculum mapping has allowed me to complete a multilevel alignment process that links course and program learning outcomes to the institutional learning outcomes. I envision curriculum mapping as a process that can help us increase department collaboration as well as build a series of bridges to provide students with continuity and a clear path on their educational journey.

*Elior Iseli,
Instructor of Economics*



INSTITUTIONAL LEARNING OUTCOMES

This fall OAC began discussions on changing our terminology from college learning outcomes to institutional learning outcomes (ILO)s. OAC supported this recommendation at our first meeting spring 2021. In our conversations with other community colleges at outcomes assessment conferences, CLOs were most often in reference to course learning outcomes. In order for a clearer understanding of terminology, and to align with other community colleges, we will begin using the following outcome language:

- Institutional Learning Outcomes: ILOs
- Program/Discipline Learning Outcomes: PLOs
- Course Learning Outcomes: CLOs

The name is changing, but the importance is still the same. We believe that students must gain knowledge, skills, and abilities beyond the specific content each class provides. Institutional learning outcomes are vital to success in education, careers, and in lifelong learning. Our ILOs are Critical Thinking, Communication, Global Awareness, Information Literacy and Quantitative Literacy. For more information:

[https://
facultydae.waubonsee.edu/
instruction/assessment/
institutional-learning-outcomes](https://facultydae.waubonsee.edu/instruction/assessment/institutional-learning-outcomes)

CELEBRATING SUCCESS AT THE HLC VIRTUAL GRADUATION CEREMONY!

Mike Moran

On October 29th, members of the Outcomes Advisory Council participated in a graduation ceremony marking the successful completion of four years of participation in the Higher Learning Commission Assessment Academy. OAC members Drea Brus, Dr. Heather LaCost, and OAC liaisons Justin Hoshaw and Michael Moran attended the virtual ceremony which recognized the accomplishments regarding the assessment of student learning that had occurred since the college's involvement going back to the fall 2016 semester.

During the ceremony, Dr. LaCost summarized the impact of participation in the academy at the college. Among the highlights were:

- 1) The expansion of institutional learning outcomes (ILOs), the adoption and implementation of rubrics used to assess the ILOs, and the initial pilot and continuing assessment of the ILOs;
- 2) Initiation of basic curriculum mapping for programs and disciplines;
- 3) The integration of outcomes training and education into existing faculty development structures through the use of World Cafes and faculty workshops during faculty development days;

4) The selection and implementation of AEFIS as an outcomes assessment management tool;

5) Enhancements and refinements to the process for developing annual assessment plans and for reporting results; and

6) The creation of data guidelines that guide the use of outcomes data.

Congratulations to all faculty, staff and administrators for their involvement in and support of our efforts to improve student learning. Our involvement in the Assessment Academy provided a valuable framework for assessing and enhancing the college's ability to ensure students are learning. While we have graduated from the Assessment Academy, our efforts will continue to help our students succeed.



*Mike Moran,
Assistant Professor of Human Services
Outcomes Faculty Liaison*

CRITICAL THINKING DISCUSSION BOARD RUBRICS IN MICROBIOLOGY

Justin Hoshaw

Last fall semester, the full-time microbiology instructors (Tracey Dosch, Sheela Vemu, and myself) got together in order to design a better rubric for student discussion board posts. Our goals were to develop a rubric that was easy to use for grading and assessment, provide clear instructions for students, and encourage students to advance their critical thinking skills at every task within an assignment.

We started by separately compiling a list of critical thinking criteria from the *Critical Thinking Discipline and Program Modified VALUE rubrics* (<https://facultydae.waubonsee.edu/sites/default/files/docs/2020-05/Critical%20Thinking-discipline-program%20aligned.pdf>) that we felt aligned with our current or planned discussion board posts. By then coming together to discuss our experiences with rubrics and this type of assignment, we were able to find common ground in terms of the specific criteria that everyone was pleased with and could benefit from using. From this list, the conversation continued as we discussed the criteria that would best fit the assignment, since some criteria were duplicitous. We included only criteria with clear differences in their achievement level descriptions and descriptions that best matched exemplary student work. Our work continued by customizing the chosen criteria by providing insights and improvements to the rubric's item descriptions based on our combined experiences in order to create a product far superior than one any of us could have created individually. This was accomplished by expanding upon item descriptions and including specific examples for clarity. A fifth column was also added to the rubric for insufficient or missing work to better allow this rubric to act as both a grading and assessment rubric.

We agreed to use the rubric for an assignment in the fall and then meet again to discuss making additional changes for the spring. I noticed that the new rubric did take more time for me to use than my previous rubric, since I was now determining the quality of student work instead of just whether or not students completed their work. Although this was an adjustment, I was pleased that this new rubric was not just simply a check list, but a tool that I could use to track student performance.

I am confident that I will get more proficient at using this rubric; to that end, I rearranged the order of the criteria to better match the order of my assignment's items. I noticed that I still needed to adjust the point values for the different achievement levels so the drop would not be as severe between the first three levels of student performance. I want to inspire students to excel, not severely penalize them for submitting work that is not perfect. There were also a few areas that I noticed I still struggled with more than I was comfortable in terms of easily differentiating achievement levels. In order to help students and myself, I added and expanded on those areas with more examples. I think it's important for faculty to understand that, much like every part of teaching that I have come across, rubrics are not meant to be static. Making small modifications can certainly help improve the ease of your grading and assessing, as well as increase clarity of directions for students. As we all know, this improved clarity has a direct relationship with student achievement. You are welcome to view my rubric here (https://docs.google.com/document/d/10EXLmx3HSMm4541_sO-pb-NRFMX-AHWxNWoP-3b98dY/edit?usp=sharing).

As the semester proceeds, the three of us plan to meet again to discuss our feedback and recommended modifications. Although the original group discussion went very smoothly, it's nice to know that at this point in the process even if we wanted to adjust our rubrics for our specific discussion posts or class, AEFIS is great in that the system can still collect the data for our established criteria even if the individual achievement level descriptions are different. Moving forward, this information will allow us to focus our future discussions on trends in the student data and how we can best help students the most in these various areas of critical thinking.



*Justin Hoshaw,
Associate Professor of Biology
Outcomes Faculty Liaison*

LOOKING AHEAD

The end of the semester is right around the corner. OAC is already making plans for the fall. We are working on creating updates for the Plan/Report for Learning Improvement forms in AEFIS, creating resources for faculty to better learn how to link assignments in AEFIS, working on curriculum mapping, and planning curriculum for fall's Faculty Development Days assessment session to maximize your time with colleagues.



*Sowjanya Dharmasankar,
Associate Professor of Economics*

USING RUBRICS FOR GLOBAL AWARENESS AND COMMUNICATION IN ECONOMICS

Sowjanya Dharmasankar

Discussion posts in my online economics classes had several requirements and I was spending a lot of time addressing individual student questions in reference to my grading of these assignments. Some of the questions were more superficial in nature, which took time to respond to. I spoke with Kathleen and Justin and decided to overhaul my rubrics. For my discussion board rubrics, I adopted criteria from the VALUE rubrics focusing on Global Awareness (<https://facultydae.waubonsee.edu/sites/default/files/docs/2020-05/Global%20Awareness.pdf>) and Communication (<https://facultydae.waubonsee.edu/sites/default/files/docs/2020-05/Communication.pdf>).

The Keynote speaker at our fall 2020 Faculty Development Days, Jeff Schinske, shared interesting aspects on how we could add

personal elements to assignments. Adding specific Global Awareness criteria into my discussion board rubric accomplished just that. Discussion board questions were more specifically addressed, student content was improved, and students were making the intended social and ethical connections. After seeing this student success, I then decided to expand my use of rubrics. I identified Communication rubric criteria that would later lead to a significant improvement in student explanation of economic issues. My time penning down individual comments and addressing superficial questions has reduced, and the best part is I can modify my rubrics as they relate to specific assignments. I thank Kathleen and Justin for taking the time in helping me see the value in using VALUE rubrics!

OAC BOOTCAMP: SHARPEN YOUR SKILLS

Andrea Brus

Conducting quality student learning outcomes assessment requires diverse knowledge, skills, and abilities. Over the last few years, we have become quite skilled in this area but there's always room for improvement. Here is where the Outcomes Advisory Council comes in! We are excited to announce the development of the OAC Bootcamp.

This self-directed set of resources will give faculty the opportunity to sharpen their assessment skills and take a deeper dive into curriculum mapping, assignment and course design, and AEFIS. Just to name a few. Each module in the Canvas course will give you the opportunity to view how-to videos from the experts, review examples, read articles and discover best practices for each topic.

Did we miss something? Would you like to get involved with a particular module? Or maybe join the OAC? Let one of our faculty liaisons know: jhoshaw@waubonsee.edu or mmoran@waubonsee.edu



*Andrea Brus,
Assistant Professor of Health
Information Technology*

Questions? Reach out to:

Dr. Kathleen Gorski, Dean for Learning Outcomes, Curriculum and Program Development
Justin Hoshaw, Associate Professor of Biology and Outcomes Faculty Liaison
Mike Moran, Assistant Professor of Human Services and Outcomes Faculty Liaison

Special Thanks to our 2020-2021 Outcomes Advisory Council for all of their commitment to improving learning for our students.

Spencer Brayton | Michelle Lindquist
Melissa Morgan | Derek Schreiner
Sharon Garcia | Jon Nichols | Sarah Quirk
Drea Brus | Tracy Limbrunner
Marjie Schoolfield | Tracey Dosch
Steve Kifowit | Lorrie Stahl | Evan Thomas
Jeanette Funaro | Elier Iseli | Heather LaCost
Julie Bechtold | Scott Peska
Justin Hoshaw | Mike Moran | Kathleen Gorski
Interested in joining?
Contact jhoshaw@waubonsee.edu for more information.